

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 QUITO 08382 301602Z

73

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 CU-02 AID-05 /076 W

----- 049927

R 301508Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2378

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 8382

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS EC

SUBJ: GOE ARREST OF POLITICAL ACTIVISTS

REF: QUITO 8219

1. SUMMARY: LOCAL MEDIA HAS REPORTED THE ARRESTS OF 36 STUDENTS WHO WERE APPARENTLY INTENDING TO ASSIST CAMPESINO LAND INVADERS IN CHIMBORAZO PROVINCE AND 36 PEOPLE IN QUITO WHO WERE MEETING WITH THE INTENTION TO FORM A POLITICAL FRONT CALLED UNION DEMOCRATICA NACIONAL (NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC UNION). THOSE ARRESTED ARE STILL BEING HELD AND ARE AT THE DISPOSITION OF THE MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT. THE ARREST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC UNION SEEMS TO REFLECT A STRONG GOE DETERMINATION TO PERMIT ONLY THAT POLITICAL ACITIVTY WHICH IS CONSISTENT WITH ITS PLAN FOR RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE. END SUMMARY

2. LOCAL MEDIA HAVE REPORTED THE ARREST OF 36 PEOPLE ON NOVEMBER. 27 WHO WERE PARTICIPATING IN A MEETING TO FORM "A DEMOCRATIC FRONT TO DEFINITELY TRANSFORM ECUADOR." ON THE SAME DATE POLICE ARRESTED 36 UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WHO WERE APPARENTLY ON THEIR WAY TO ASSIST CAMPESINOS WHO HAD RECENTLY INVADED AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN CHIMBORAZO PROVINCE. (REFTEL). LATE REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE PRISONERS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 QUITO 08382 301602Z

ARE STILL BEING HELD AND ARE "AT THE ORDERS OF THE MINISTER

OF GOVERNMENT."

3. THOSE ARRESTED IN THE POLITICAL MEETING IN QUITO WERE IDENTIFIED AS MEMBERS OF THE UNION DEMOCRATICA NACIONAL (NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC UNION), A GROUP WHOSE OWN PUBLISHED MANIFESTO CALLS FOR THE "GREAT POPULAR AND PROGRESSIVE SECTORS OF ECUADOR, AS WELL AS LABOR CONFEDERATIONS, PARTIES AND GROUPS OF THE LEFT, THE NEW CHURCH, . . . STUDENTS AND THE MILITARY TO FORM A WIDE DEMOCRATIC FRONT TO MAKE THE DEFINITIVE TRANSFORMATION OF ECUADOR."

4. ALTHOUGH THE GOE HAS MADE NO PUBLIC DECLARATION CONCERNING THE ARRESTS, INFORMAL REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVED THE MEETING HAD SUBVERSIVE OBJECTIVES. AMONG THOSE ARRESTED WERE LUIS GOMEZ IZQUIERDO, FORMER MINISTER OF FINANCE UNDER VELASCO IBARRA, AND MAGDALENA ADOUM, DIRECTOR OF THE MARXIST MAGAZINE "NUEVA." THE GROUP'S MANIFESTO LISTED GENERALLY LEFTIST OBJECTIVES BUT DID NOT CALL FOR VIOLENT OR ILLEGAL ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THOSE GOALS.

5. COMMENT: THE GOE-PRE-EMPTIVE ACTION AGAINST THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SEEMS TO BE ENTIRELY WITHIN THE "IN-FLAGRANTE" CATEGORY AND HAS RAISED FEW HACKLES. HOWEVER, IN COMBINATION WITH THE ACTION AGAINST THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC UNION IT HAS RAISED SOME BASIC QUESTIONS ABOUT THE GOE. WHILE THE GOE CONTINUES TO PRESENT EVIDENCE THAT IT IS COMMITTED TO A PROCESS OF RETURNING THE GOVERNMENT TO CIVILIAN CONTROL, THE CURRENT UNSETTLED POLITICAL SITUATION HAS APPARENTLY COMPELLED THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT TO TAKE A HARDER LINE AGAINST DISRUPTIVE ELEMENTS IN THE SHORT-RUN. HOW SERIOUS A SECURITY THREAT, THE PARLOR MARXISTS BELONGING TO THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC UNION ACTUALLY ARE IS QUESTIONABLE, HOWEVER, THERE IS A GROWING SUSPICION BY SOME ON THE RIGHT OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM THAT SUCH GROUPS ARE PARTICIPANTS IN A CONCERTED EFFORT BY THE LEFT TO DISRUPT THE CURRENT POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT AND PREVENT A RETURN TO MODERATE CIVILIAN RULE.

6. WHATEVER THE BASIS FOR ITS ACTION, WE BELIEVE THAT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 QUITO 08382 301602Z

THE ARRESTS DO REPRESENT LESS A PRONOUNCED MOVE TOWARD GREATER AUTHORITARIANISM THAN A JUMPY AND ERRATIC RESPONSE TO THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION. WHAT SEEMS APPARENT IS THAT THE GOE IS DETERMINED THAT POLITICAL ACTIVITY SHALL BE RESTRICTED TO CERTAIN CHANNELS AND THAT IT SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED TO THREATEN THE GOE PLAN FOR A RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE.
BLOOMFIELD

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL DISORDERS, ARRESTS, PARTY MEETINGS, STUDENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976QUITO08382
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760443-1099
From: QUITO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976113/aaaaacpp.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 QUITO 8219
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUL 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <08 NOV 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOE ARREST OF POLITICAL ACTIVISTS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, EC, NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC UNION
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006